

What is claimed is:

1. A method for producing wallpaper on-demand, comprising the steps of:

utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which passes a printhead

5 on the way to a dispensing slot;

selecting a pattern and a configuration;

using one or more printer input devices which communicate with a processor to input the pattern and the configuration; and

printing a roll of wallpaper, onto a web of blank media, on demand, according to the selected pattern and

10 configuration.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the configuration comprises:

a selected width; and wherein

the width is captured as data with a printer input device; and

15 the printer is used to slit the web to the width.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the configuration comprises:

a selected roll length; and wherein

the roll length is captured as data with a printer input device; and

20 the printer is used to cut the web to the roll length.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:

charging a customer only for the length.

25 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

acquiring data about pattern or configuration from a touchscreen display.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

providing the printer with a scanner on a tether for capturing data that specifies a selected pattern or other
30 data.

7. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:

allowing the customer to select a media type and using that media type in a replaceable media cartridge in the printer.

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8. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the pattern is selected from printed swatches which correspond to patterns that the printer is able to print on demand.

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9. The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of:

providing a plurality of swatches;

assigning a symbol to each swatch;

using the symbol as an input to a printer input device.

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10. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the configuration comprises one or more parameters selected from the group comprising: roll length, a roll slitting arrangement, one or more modifications to the pattern, or a media type to be printed on.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein:

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the configuration comprises both roll length and a roll width slitting arrangement.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:

loading a media canister into the printer, the canister containing an unprinted web of media; and

using a motor in the printer to advance the unprinted web into the path;

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automatically threading the media from the loading area, to the dispensing slot.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:

loading a disposable core into a winding area adjacent to the dispensing slot;

winding a printed roll of wallpaper onto a core; and

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severing the printed roll on the core from the web.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:
severing the printed roll on the core from the web using an automated cutting mechanism inside the printer,
the cutting mechanism receiving a signal for commencing cutting from the processor.

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15. The method of claim 13, wherein:
the core is contained within a tote during winding.

16. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

10 drying the web after it is printed on but before it is dispensed by the printer.

17. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:

drying the web after it is printed on but before it is dispensed by the printer.

15 18. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

allowing a customer to design a custom pattern defined by data;

using the one or more input devices to capture the data; and

printing the custom pattern on demand.

20 19. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

selling printed rolls as they are produced to eliminate printed wallpaper inventory.

20. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the web of blank media is printed by the printhead at a rate
exceeding 0.02 square meters per second (775 square feet per hour).

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21. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the web of blank media is printed by the printhead at a rate
exceeding 0.1 square meters per second (3875 square feet per hour).

22. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the web of blank media is printed by the printhead at a rate
30 exceeding 0.2 square meters per second (7750 square feet per hour).

23. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 7680 nozzles.

24. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 20,000 nozzles.

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25. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 100,000 nozzles.

26. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 250,000 nozzles.

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27. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead prints ink drops with a volume of less than 5 picoliters.

28. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead prints ink drops with a volume of less than 3 picoliters.

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29. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead prints ink drops with a volume of less than 1.5 picoliters.

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30. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer is a self contained printer for producing rolls of wallpaper, the printer comprising:

a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a media cartridge loading area to a winding area;

a full width digital color printhead located in the media path;

a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular roll; and

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the winding area adapted to removably retain a core and wind onto it, wallpaper produced by the printer.

31. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:

loading a media cartridge into the printer, the media cartridge, comprising:

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a case in which a roll of blank media may be deployed;

the case having two halves, hinged together, an area between the two halves, when closed, defining a media supply slot; and

the case having internally and adjacent to the slot, a pair of rollers, at least one of the rollers being a driven roller which is supported at each end, by the case, for rotation by an external motor.

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32. A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of providing a consumer tote for carrying the roll of wallpaper, the tote comprising:

a disposable exterior in which is formed a main access flap and a pair of core access openings; and

the tote having an interior in which is located a disposable core which is aligned with the access openings.

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33. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a transverse cutter, the transverse cutter comprising:

a chassis having end plates;

the end plates being separated to allow a web of media to pass between them;

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the end plates supporting between them a cutting blade; and

the blade supported at each end to perform a cutting motion which begins on one side of the web and finishes on an opposite side of the web.

34. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a slitting mechanism, the slitting mechanism comprising:

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a chassis having end plates;

the end plates being separated by a transverse portion of the chassis to allow a web of media to pass between them;

one or more rotating slitting shafts extending between the end plates, each shaft having one or more slitters

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arranged along its length, each slitter having a cutting edge; and

the slitting mechanism selectively engageable to either enter or not enter a path followed by the web according to an input provided by an operator of the printer.

35. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a dryer, the dryer comprising:

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a compartment with a top opening for receiving a media web fed from the printer;

a source of heated air located above the top opening for blowing heated air into the opening to dry printing on the media web.

36. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer comprises:

- 5 a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a media loading area to a winding area;
- a printhead located in the media path;
- a processor which accepts operator inputs from one or more input devices which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular roll; and
- the winding area adapted to removably retain a core and wind onto it, wallpaper produced by the printer
- 10 wherein,
- the length and design of the roll are determined by the operator inputs.

37. A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

- utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a
- 15 media loading area to a winding area, there being a printhead located in the media path, a processor which accepts operator inputs from one or more input devices;
- using one or more input devices which communicate with the processor to capture data from an operator regarding a specification for an operator's requirements;
- using the processor to operatively control the printer according to the data; and
- 20 printing a single roll of wallpaper, on demand, according to a selected pattern.

38. A method as claimed in claim 1 adapted for operating a wallpaper printing business, the method further comprising the steps of:

- utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a
- 25 media loading area to a printhead and from the printhead to a dispensing slot;
- using one or more printer input devices which communicate with a processor to capture data regarding one or more customer's requirements;
- the data comprising at least a customer selected pattern;
- printing a roll of wallpaper, onto a web of blank media, on demand, according to the selected pattern; and
- 30 charging a customer for the roll.

39. A method as claimed in claim 1 adapted for operating a wallpaper printing franchise, the method further comprising the steps of:

providing to franchisees, an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which
5 extends from a media loading area to a printhead and from the printhead to a dispensing slot;

the printer having one or more printer input devices which communicate with a processor to capture data regarding one or more customer requirements, the data comprising at least a customer selected pattern; providing the franchisee with a collection of patterns in a digital storage medium that can be read by the printer;

10 enabling the franchisee to print a roll of wallpaper, onto a web of blank media, on demand, according to the selected pattern; and

obtaining or attempting to obtain a fee from the franchisee.

40. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer adapted to produce rolls of wallpaper, the printer
15 comprising:

a frame in which is located a media path which extends from a media loading area to a winding area;

a printhead located across the media path;

one or more input devices for capturing operator instructions;

a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular
20 roll; and

the winding area adapted to removably retain a core and wind onto it, wallpaper produced by the printer.

41. A method as claimed in claim 1 adapted for printing wallpaper onto a web of media, the method further comprising the steps of:

25 utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path, there being a full width printhead located across the media path, there being a processor which accepts operator inputs from one or more input devices and which controls the printer;

using one or more input devices which communicate with the processor to capture data from an operator regarding a specification;

30 running the printer according to the data;

printing a single roll of wallpaper, on demand, according to a selected pattern and configuration;
 changing the pattern according to a new datum from an operator; and
 then printing a new roll onto the same web.

- 5 42. A method as claimed in claim 1 adapted for drying a moving web of media in a printer such as a wallpaper printer, the method further comprising the steps of:
 loading the web in a path that traverses a compartment in a dryer within the printer, the compartment having an opening across the top;
 allowing the moving web to descend into the compartment, as required; and
 10 blowing heated air from above the opening.

43. A method as claimed in claim 1 adapted for supplying a media web to a wallpaper printer, comprising the steps of:

- opening a reusable case;
 15 placing into the case a core onto which has been located a supply roll of blank wallpaper media;
 supporting the core for rotation within the case;
 leading a free edge of the roll between a pair of rollers and past an edge of the open case; then
 with the rollers located within the case and on either side of the web, closing the case and loading it into a
 printer.

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44. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a printhead assembly which prints onto a moving web that follows a path, the printer comprising:

- a full width printhead located across the path;
 the printhead comprising a color printhead which is at least as wide as the web;
 25 the printhead being supplied with a number of different inks which are remote from the printhead and which supply the printhead through tubes.

45. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer is adapted to produce rolls of wallpaper, the printer comprising:

- 30 a housing in which is located a media path which extends from a blank media intake to a wallpaper exit slot;

a multi-color roll width removable printhead located in the housing and across the media path;
 the printhead being supplied by separate ink reservoirs, the reservoirs connected to the printhead by a an ink supply harness, there being a disconnect coupling between the reservoirs and the printhead;
 one or more input devices for capturing operator instructions;

- 5 a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular roll.

46. A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of providing a consumer tote for carrying the roll of wallpaper, the tote comprising:

- 10 a disposable exterior in which is formed a main access flap and a pair of core access openings;
 the tote having an interior in which is located a disposable core which is aligned with the access openings;
 both openings exposing a moulded coupling, one coupling attached to each end of the core, at least one of the couplings being a driven coupling and adapted to engage a driving spindle that rotates the core.

- 15 47. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer is adapted to print onto a moving web, the printer comprising:

a full width stationary printhead located on a rail along which it slides for service and removal;
 a number of replaceable ink reservoirs which supply the printhead with different inks;
 the printhead comprising a color printhead which is at least as wide as the web; and

- 20 the printhead being supplied with the different inks through tubes which can be disconnected so the printhead may be removed.

48. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer is a self threading printer for producing rolls of wallpaper, the printer comprising:

- 25 a media loading area adapted to support a media cartridge in a position so that a media supply slot of the cartridge is closely adjacent to a pilot guide;
 a cabinet housing a media path which extends from the pilot guide to a printed media dispensing slot;
 a printhead located across the media path;
 a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular
 30 roll;

a motor within the cabinet for advancing a media web out of the media cartridge; and
one or more other motors adapted to urge the media along the path and out of the slot.